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FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0694  
INFO RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA PRIORITY 1994  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 9030  
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU PRIORITY 7268  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 5191  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 3418  
RUEHNW/AMEMBASSY OSLO PRIORITY 5143  
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY 0020  
RUEHSM/AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM PRIORITY 0678  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 4254  
RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI PRIORITY 9593  
RUEHBI/AMCONSUL MUMBAI PRIORITY 6887  
RUEHON/AMCONSUL TORONTO PRIORITY 1352  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 3801  
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY  
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 000994

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SCA/INSB

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/29/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PREF](#) [PHUM](#) [PTER](#) [FAID](#) [MOPS](#) [CE](#)

SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER RESPONDS TO WAR INCIDENTS REPORT

REF: A. SECSTATE 109032  
      [1B](#). SECSTATE 109500  
      [1C](#). COLOMBO 988

Classified By: DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION VALERIE C. FOWLER. REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

[¶1.](#) (C) On October 28, Ambassador was called in by Foreign Minister Bogollagama to discuss the response of the Sri Lankan government (GSL) to the U.S. Report on Incidents in the Recent Conflict. The FM said the GSL was not satisfied with the report and they understood it reached no legal conclusions. But he said they were "mindful of our responsibility to our own people," and President Rajapaksa said he wanted to examine it. In that vein, the president had decided to form the group of eminent persons to formulate the GSL response to the report and to engage with us on it. He said the first phase of the GSL response was characterized by the government's initial public statement; now we had entered the phase of examining the substance of the report. Finally, Bogollagama claimed the MFA would have the "formal responsibility" of communicating with the U.S. on GSL thinking on the report and follow-up actions. He referred to colleagues in other ministries who had already begun discussing the report in public and essentially warned that we should not pay attention to them. Rather, we should consider our discussions on the report "classified" and should confine them to the MFA, State Department, and our embassies. "The less public discussion of this the better," he opined.

[¶2.](#) (C) COMMENT: Bogollagama's statements on the report were generally in line with the relatively moderate tone that we have heard from GSL officials since the report appeared last week. Acknowledgment that they have a responsibility to their own people in terms of the report is an important first step. We will watch closely to see whether they take the next crucial step of truly empowering the eminent persons group and giving it independence. As for Bogollagama's claim that his ministry alone had responsibility for dealing with the United States on the report, he has tried this consolidation act on other issues in the past. We will

continue to engage on the report with any GSL entity that wishes to do so until President Rajapaksa asks us to deal only with Bogollagama.

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